

Thomas McKean, Jr. House
269 South Fifth Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

HABS No. PA-190

HABS
PA
51 PHILA
239-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

Historic American Buildings Survey

National Park Service
Eastern Office Design and Construction
120 S. Third Street, Phila., Pa.

THOMAS MCKEAN, Jr. HOUSE
269 So. Fifth Street, Philadelphia 6, Pa.

Owner - demolished October 1957
last owner, U.S. Government, part of Independence National Historical
Park Project

Date of Erection - probably 1816

Philadelphia Directories 1816-1837 list Thomas J. McKean as residing
at 117 So. 5th Street (now 269 So. 5th St.)

The Mutual Assurance Fire Survey for 271 So. 5th Street states that
there was no house on either side in 1811. It was built as now
standing (with alterations) before 1839 when it was surveyed for
the Contributionship Insurance Company, Policy No. 5421 (survey
appended).

It can be assumed that Thomas McKean, Jr. moved into a new house
in 1816 when his residence at this address was first listed. It may
also be assumed that this house was the house which was surveyed
for Henry Pratt McKean in 1839 as there is no mention that it was
a new house at that time.

Date of Viewing - September 30 - October 3, 1957

Present condition - Previous to demolition, the front facade was in doubtful
condition with settling brickwork. The original window frames and
door frame were in good condition. The interior had been greatly
changed before the 1865 resurvey when most of the interior walls
had been torn out as the building was changed from residential to
business use. A four story back building had been added sometime
after 1865. There was sign of a fire at the top of the stairway.

Description -

Plan - On each of the lower floors there were two rooms with a passage
and the stairwell in the middle with windows opening to the north.

Facade - 23 feet wide, 41 ft. 5 1/2 inches to bottom of cornice

Three stories with basement

Walls of brick in Flemish bond still with original pointing
with mortar pressed in with three strokes

Basement faced with marble, 4 ft. 1 1/2 inches high, including
marble water course, one window and one door

Ground floor with entrance door on south, next to party wall.

Present door added about 1880, with Eastlake design. Door
opening spanned by an elliptical arch, with marble facing
and ornamented impost blocks and keystone. Two windows
with plain glass, latter additions. Height of ground
floor 13'7".

Second floor height 13'4". Three windows with double hung
sashes of 12 lights. Marble sills and marble lintels
with ornamental blocks with incised circles.

Description cont'd

Facade cont'd

Third floor 10' 5" with three windows with double hung sashes of six lights.

Tin cornice edges flat roof.

South wall is a party wall.

North wall of original building 50' in depth, brick now covered with stucco. Wall broken by two large windows which light the stairwell and hence are not on floor levels in the front part of the building. The back rooms are lighted by two windows, one on either side of the back chimney. There was also a chimney going up the north wall in the middle of the front rooms.

East Wall, original state not known as four story addition now there.

Interior - The framing is of wood. The walls were plastered. Some handsome moldings remained in the upstairs front room. The stairs were exceptionally handsome. The first floor stairs were taken out and straight stairs put in against the north wall. The upper floors have the original geometrical stairs set in an oval stairwell into which large flat windows had been inserted. The balusters were turned. Lead brackets of varying sizes were used.

The doors and windows had pilaster architraves with Gothic and bead moldings.

History -

After serving as a residence until after the Civil War, it was used as a workshop. The firm of Dubs & Co.--- Joiners vacated it just before demolition.

References -

Contributionship Company Survey No. 5421

May 9, 1839 - \$3500. by John C. Evans

resurvey August 21, 1865

Charles E. Peterson's files in INHPP

Restoration Drawings by William Murtagh and C.E. Peterson

Measuring Field Books

Agnes A. Gilchrist
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
120 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

"I have Surveyed, by order of Henry Pratt McKean a House situate on the East side of Fifth Street, South of Prune Street No. Being 23 feet front 50 feet deep - three stories high, 14 & 9 in. walls. The lower story is divided in two rooms, short passage & stair case in the middle. The floor of clean yellow pine base round, single mouldings & pilaster architraves marble mantles with columns & poles to two pair of large folding doors & main doors of mahogany Glass 14 by 22" panneld inside shutters & outside Venetian do. back. -- The 2nd story in these rooms & large closet on the landing-floor of clean yellow pine base round, pilaster architraves - recess & breast closets marble mantles, one with columns & one with swell'n pilasters--glass 14 by 22"-- pannel'd inside shutters front & back. -- The 3rd story in three rooms & closet as below--floor of clean white pine--base round, plain pilaster architraves--wooden mantles with pilasters, beeded & fluted--recess & breast closets--glass 14 by 24 & 14 by 26" pannel'd inside shutters front & back -- all the sash dble. hung-- Garret in two rooms--plastered, two large circular head dormer windows--skylight & trap door in the roof--stairs, open & oval well--bracketted--turn'd ballusters, continued rail of mahogany from the cellar to the garret. The kitchen in the cellar & room front-floor of comm. yellow pine plain base, single mouldings, mantle shelf, dresser closet & pantry--glass 10 by 14" outside

shutters--plain Eave front & back--copper gutters & tin pipes

5 Mo. 11th - 1839 John C. Evans

No. 5421 May 9, 1839 Dollars 3500 2% \$70

T. McKean

H. Pratt McKean